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## WAR "INVENTIONS."

Just as war times stimulate deeds of gallantry and heroism, so also they seem to bring forth a great amount of incredible efforts at rhyming, and an unlimited number of weird suggestions on the part of individuals who consider themselves inventors. So far, our governmental authorities have preserved silence on the subject of freakish proposals with which they are bombarded. Every effort is made to see what possible kernel of value each suggestion may contain. Numerous elaborate experiments have been made whenever a spark of plausibility could be discerned, and officials have been lavish in many cases with arguments and explanations designed to show the inventors why their theories would not work—usually, it must be confessed without success, for many of this sort cannot believe they are wrong and are convinced that only favoritism or jealousy keeps their ideas from winning recognition.

Information made public in London affords a notion of the sort of stuff the war officials have to deal with. Among the suggestions made to the inventions department of the British ministry of munitions are that the clouds be frozen artificially and guns mounted on them; that the moon be covered with a big black balloon; that a black beam of light—whatever that may be—be used to obscure the moon; that balloons carry magnets hung on strings, to attract the rifles out of the men's hands; that heavy guns be suspended from captive balloons; that aeroplanes be armed with scissors or scythes, like Boadicea's chariot; that lawn mowers be built as large as tanks, to make white meat out of the enemy; that heat rays be projected to set Zeppelins on fire; that shells be made with men inside them to steer them at the target; that shells be made containing fleas or other germs, inoculated with disease; that cement be squirted over the enemy to petrify them; that snakes be sent into the enemy trenches by pneumatic propulsion; that live wire cables carrying a high voltage of electricity be thrown among the enemy by means of rockets; that a tunnel be built all the way into Germany; that cormorants be trained to fly to Essen, to pick the mortar out of the chimneys of the Krupp plant; and that the last car of the last train over each line of railway each night should dribble shoe blacking on the

tracks to conceal them from the enemy airmen.

These extraordinary suggestions, no doubt, seem of value to those who have originated them. They have a sort of superficial logic on their side when they say that stranger things have been done. But there is a distinct difference between the marvels which are feasible and the marvels which are absurd. In the main it will be found that an enormous amount of hard work lies behind every wonder that has been reduced to practicality.

## "DOLLAR DIPLOMACY."

The conventional Prussian sneer at the United States has been that we are a dollar-mad nation. "Dollar diplomacy," a phrase invented by Mr. Bryan, has been held up to ridicule and opprobrium not only in our political campaigns but in the speech of our foreign critics.

Nothing that Germany says will count any more. We are beginning generally to comprehend much as to Germany's motives which was plain enough all the time to those who had eyes to see. We have come to understand that, among the conscienceless dollar grabbers of the world, the Germans rank first. Their unfair and unprincipled methods of trade extension have surpassed in thoroughness and efficacy anything attempted by their rivals. We have come to understand also that in a fair sense, limited by the principles of honorable dealing, "dollar diplomacy" is nothing to be ashamed of, for the extension of trade into foreign markets is a national duty—something that manufacturers owe to the employees who are dependent upon their growth and prosperity for the enlargement of their own opportunities, and something that the government owes to all the citizens for whose welfare it has been established.

America's shortcomings in respect of "dollar diplomacy" lie on the side of too little done. Of all the great nations, the United States has been the most backward in advancing its foreign trade. Compared with Germany, Japan, France and England, we have been stupidly quiescent. Queen Elizabeth was the original "dollar diplomatist," and the prosperity of England—built upon the foundation which she laid of intelligent legislation at home and intelligent diplomacy abroad for the opening up of new channels of trade—has endured every subsequent shock. Grievous blunders in other fields have been unable to weaken this bulwark of British strength.

Now, when every other nation is straining its efforts to arrive at a commercial preparedness fit to withstand the shocks of a returning peace, we find those responsible for the policy of the United States still strangely reluctant to take the necessary steps. The degraded and unscrupulous commercial diplomacy of Germany is not to be imitated, to be sure, but if we are to hold our own against it and against the commercial rivalry of our present Allies, we must manage somehow, and soon, to arrange a practical post-war trade program.

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## SERGY.

American soldiers have won their hardest fight in this war and henceforth the little town on the Ourcq med Sergy will have a place in our story beside names of other renowned battlefields. Our great difficulty in the present battle north of the Marne is to preserve a proper perspective and balance while reading the thrilling news. The tendency, quite naturally, has been to "play up" American achievements. So long as we do not lose our sense of proportion there is no objection to this. The only danger lies in exaggerating the importance of American achievements in their relation to the battle as a whole.

Nothing, however, should prevent us from telling the story of Sergy and drawing from it the full significance. It is a story that should put an end to any lingering indifference or lack of interest in the war on the part of the great masses of our people. It is a regrettable fact that we have become so accustomed to reading of the war that many people do not take the trouble to follow the details of the fighting, being content with reading the headlines so long as things seem to be going well.

Such indifference at this time is little short of criminal. It is disloyalty of a disgraceful kind, for what kind of loyalty is it that negatively approves the war and takes the actual war—the fighting and dying, the heroism and sacrifices—as a matter of course. Can we be wholly for the war without feeling it? And can we really feel it without following the details of the fighting in which our men are winning undying fame? There is no doubt of how future generations will be thrilled by accounts of what has taken place in the past two weeks. Can we afford to remain unmoved by the same events?

The story of the fight for Sergy must come to be regarded as one of the most glorious chapters in all our history. When all the details are known it will be found that the valor displayed by men from New York equals that of any soldiers who have fought for liberty on any battlefield. Already the curtain of fire has been partly lifted and we get a glimpse of what has been happening there on the Ourcq during the past few days.

Sergy is only a little village of ruins, but it is the enemy's center in the contracting line in the Marne salient. There is every reason for believing that the Germans planned to hold the Americans on the Ourcq, at least for a few days. As we know, they failed, in the first instance, to prevent the Americans from crossing the river. The story of the crossing, led by men of the old Sixty-ninth Regiment, has only been partly told. Yesterday the Americans who had defied the rain of shells and established themselves on the north bank of the river were called upon to defend themselves against the most formidable efforts the Germans have yet made against Americans.

Early yesterday morning the Americans holding Sergy were attacked by the Fourth Prussian Guard Division. Overwhelmed by superior numbers the defenders were forced out of the village. They were soon back again. During the day the village changed hands no less than nine times. It finally remained in our hands, and the enemy is now back in Nestle Forest, two miles farther north, with our troops still advancing. In its way the battle for Sergy was decisive. The best soldiers in the German Army, fighting with courage and desperation, were unable to hold against comparatively raw American troops.

The explanation is to be found in the single incident that has been cabled in detail. That tells of the heroism of "a weary-looking" lad named James Hyland of 121 Fort Greene place, Brooklyn. He was one of fifty men sent to hold a certain street in Sergy. Only twenty-odd members of the platoon reached the village. There they encountered the most stubborn resistance from machine-gun fire.

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The west front map in *The New York American* is distinguished for showing that the Allies are nine times as far from Berlin as the Germans are from Paris. So it shows through.

The grand dukes of Russia have always been about as grand as anything there was. But as ex-grand dukes they sound a shade grander than ever. It is not a popular title in Russia just now—a grand duke in Russia seems about as safe as a landlord in Ireland. But after things quiet down into peaceful democratic simplicity, who knows what may happen? "Ex-grand duke," or just "ex," for short, may become as common as "colonel" or "doc" in our own democratic states, where titles, like everything else, are free and equal.

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## METROPOLITAN MOVIES.



Dad—I say, boys! You've got that European situation all doped out. Now, come on and grab the lawn mower and see what you can do in the way of reducing this sale

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## Germans Fail to Stand.

The most determined counter-attack that the enemy has made since falling back from the south bank of the Marne has been shattered within the past twenty-four hours. It brought the enemy the temporary possession of several villages scattered along thirty miles of line. He had abandoned them with little resistance in his retreat north of the Ourcq River. He recaptured them at heavy cost and in general failed to hold them. In dealing with the American troops he was bested in some of the bitterest fighting that the present offensive has produced. In the conflicts about the little villages of Sergy and Serignes, these places each changed hands many times, and after giving unequal lodging to Prussian guard troops remained finally in American possession.

The despatches reveal enough to make it apparent that the enemy employed large fresh forces in a concerted effort to check the pursuit of the French and Americans, and to recover in part the line of the Ourcq River. The rapid crossing of the Ourcq had conceivably exceeded German anticipation. Speedy pursuit forced the enemy to attack against village positions that he had intended to attack from. His failure to regain them, considering the effort he made, is remarkable for the present stage of the offensive.

As an army retreats before close pursuit it must either check the pursuit sooner or later, or steadily decline till it collapses. The enemy has not checked the army that is hunting him relentlessly. He has slowed down onces at his heels failed to make one gain on him. If the present operation had followed the course of the most successful of the recent German drives in France it would have come to a stop by now. The remarkable thing is that the enemy still finds it necessary to yield.

So long as he does this some prospect exists that he may be forced gradually into collapse. The possibility at least justifies pressing the enemy so far as he will yield. In the meantime thanks largely to the energy of American troops the German losses continue heavy. We are finding out that the German is not the best nor the second best soldier in the world, especially when fate is discouraging. It remains to enforce against him the advantage which his present inferiority and uncertainty of action reveal.

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issues—the initiative and the referendum, the recall of judges and other matter, that count as nothing at this time.

## Americans Have Not Fastened in Vain—Our Soldiers and Allies Well Fed.

It is pleasing to read in a cablegram that American soldiers paused in the good work of strafing the Hun to feast on the battlefield, and that they had for supper: Boiled beef and onions, roast pork, potatoes, bread and butter and coffee and rice pudding. An excellent and nourishing meal, and it strengthened the valiant sons of America to go on with the work of slaying Germans.

The fact that not only our soldier boys can banquet on good beef and onions on a stricken field is due to the patriotism of the American people at home. Food Saver Hoover said to the people: Don't eat so much. Don't eat flour at all. Cut down on beef and pork and leave them off your bill of fare on certain days in the week.

Everybody except a few sordid gluttons did this, to the benefit of their health and purses, and the result has been that ships laden to the guards have been sailing over the seas—and still are sailing—filled with flour and wheat, meat, potatoes, sugar, coffee and other foods, and not only our soldiers have plenty of things to eat, but our allies in Great Britain and France and Italy are getting all they wish. England even has started a reserve supply of meat with what she has received from America and Canada.

We rejoice without ceasing to know that American soldiers and their foreign comrades are getting all they wish to eat and what tobacco they require, while the wretched Hun eats spoiled potatoes if he can get them, with "a flake of fat" and follows this mess with a cigar made out of the leaves of a cherry tree.

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The racing yacht *Germania*, which was loaned to Herr Krupp von Bohlen and four years ago, has been placed by its present owner, Christopher Henckels, at the disposal of the United States Shipping Board. The vessel was designed under the personal supervision of the Kaiser and is now being used by student officers of the United States Navy.